

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the specification as follows:

Please replace paragraph 0040 with the following rewritten paragraph:

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B1

[0040] Each information-bearing optical signal produced by an optical transmitter constitutes a channel in optical system 10. In a WDM system, each channel is generally associated with a unique wavelength. As depicted in FIG. 1, six optical transponders  $20_1$ - $20_6$  are provided to create a six-channel wavelength division multiplexed optical communication system along transmission path  $40_1$  and six optical transponders  $60_1$ - $60_6$  are provided to create a six-channel wavelength division multiplexed optical communication system along transmission path  $40_2$ . The optical transmitters located within transponders  $20_1$ - $20_6$  operate at channel wavelengths of  $\lambda_1$ - $\lambda_6$ , respectively. These optical signal channels are output from transponders  $20_1$ - $20_6$  and are brought together in optical switch  $30_1$  for conveyance to optical waveguide  $40_1$  via output port  $26_1$  in the form of a multiplexed optical signal. Optical switch  $30_1$  has six input ports that are optically coupled to the six transponders  $20_1$ - $20_6$  through optical waveguides  $22_1$ - $22_6$ . Likewise, the optical transmitters located within transponders  $60_1$ - $60_6$  also operate at channel wavelengths of  $\lambda_1$ - $\lambda_6$  respectively. These optical signal channels are output from transponders  $60_1$ - $60_6$  and are brought together in optical switch  $32_2$  for conveyance to optical waveguide  $40_2$  via output port  $26_2$ . Optical transmission path  $40_1$  is typically an optical waveguide and is the principal transmission medium for the optical communication system. While the optical waveguide is generally selected from single-mode optical, any optical waveguiding medium which is capable of transporting multiple optical wavelengths can be employed as waveguide  $40_1$  in optical system 10. Similar to optical switch  $30_1$ , optical switch  $32_2$  provides a multiplexed optical signal along optical transmission path  $40_2$ . Following transmission and amplification of the multiplexed optical signals along waveguides